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ABSTRACT

A study evaluated the Title I Early Literacy program that served 1,503 underachieving pupils in grades 1 (1,169) and 2 (334) in the Columbus, Ohio, public schools. The purpose of the Early Literacy program was to provide early intervention to underachieving first- and second-grade pupils who appeared unlikely to learn to read successfully without additional reading instruction. The program featured small group instruction each day for 40-45 minutes on reading and writing activities. A major part of the evaluation effort was accomplished through the administration of the Metropolitan Achievement Tests (MAT7, 1992). Administered on a spring-spring test cycle, the test series served as the pretest and posttest for grade 2 pupils. the spring administration to grade 1 pupils in April, 1996 served as the pretest for grade 2. Results indicated that: (1) 70.3% of a treatment group of 944 pupils displayed over time each of 3 strategic processing behaviors (constructing meaning, monitoring reading, and integrating sources of information; (2) 382 (53.4%) grade 1 pupils read 5 or more books at level 8 or above and 146 (64.0%) grade 2 pupils independently read at least 5 books at text reading level 15 or above; (3) in reading comprehension, discontinued pupils (61) gained 0.85 normal curve equivalents (NCEs) and not discontinued pupils (97) lost 7.88 NCEs; and (4) parent involvement information showed that 3,728 contact were made with program teachers. Findings support continuation of the program with consideration given to 7 areas of concern. (Contains 10 figures of data.) (RS)

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Elementary and Secondary Education Act - Title I

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT
1996-97

TITLE I EARLY LITERACY READING PROGRAM

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Elementary and Secondary Education Act - Title I

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT
EARLY LITERACY READING PROGRAM
1996-97

Executive Summary

Program Description: The Early Literacy program served 1503 pupils in grades 1 (1169) and 2 (334). Funding for the program was provided through Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) - Title I monies.

The purpose of the Early Literacy program was to provide early intervention to underachieving first- and second-grade pupils who appeared unlikely to learn to read successfully without additional reading instruction. The program featured small group instruction for first- or second-grade pupils for 40-45 minutes daily. During 1996-97, 47 teachers served pupils in 33 schools. Each teacher served an average of 32.0 pupils.

Time Interval: For evaluation purposes, the program started on September 23, 1996 and continued through May 2, 1997. This provided a maximum of 138 days of instruction. Pupils included in the final analyses for Desired Outcomes 1 and 2 must have attended at least 50 percent of the scheduled program days. To be included in the analysis of standardized test achievement, grade 2 pupils must have attended at least 50 percent of the scheduled program days, been English-speaking, and have had valid pretest and posttest scores on a nationally standardized achievement test.

Activities: The Early Literacy program teacher and each group of pupils worked together each day on reading and writing activities. The lessons included reading to the pupils, guided reading of charts and stories, shared reading/writing activities, independent reading/writing activities, and activities designed to help pupils attend more closely to print. The lessons were tailored to build on what the pupils already knew while strengthening a self improvement system which would lead to continued growth.

Desired Outcomes: Two desired outcomes were established for the Early Literacy program. First, at least 75 percent of the pupils who attended the program at least 50 percent of the treatment period or who were successfully discontinued (completed) would display three strategic processing behaviors twice over time - constructs meaning, monitors reading, and integrates sources of information. Second, at least 75 percent of the grade 1 pupils who attended the program at least 50 percent of the treatment period or who were discontinued would read at least five books at text reading level 8 or above, and at least 75 percent of the grade 2 pupils who attended the program at least 50 percent of the treatment period or who were discontinued would read at least five books at text reading level 15 or above.

Evaluation Design: In addition to the two desired outcomes, aggregate test data were reported for pupils in grades 2 and above for individual buildings for Reading Comprehension. Although not part of the evaluation design, parent involvement information was also collected by program teachers. A major part of the evaluation effort was to be accomplished through the administration of the Metropolitan Achievement Tests, (MAT7, 1992). Administered on a spring-spring test cycle, the test series served as the pretest and posttest for grade 2 pupils. The spring administration to grade 1 pupils in April, 1996, (the last time grade 1 pupils were administered the MAT7) served as the pretest for grade 2. Analyses of the standardized test data included average NCE scores and pretest-posttest NCE gains for grade 2. In April, 1997, grade 1 pupils were administered a benchmark reading assessment for the first time that became part of the evaluation effort. Another major part of the evaluation effort was to be accomplished through the collection of data, using locally constructed instruments, on pupil reading processing behaviors and pupil independent reading. Locally constructed instruments were also used to collect enrollment/attendance and parent involvement data.

Major Findings: The information collected at the end of the year (on Pupil Data Sheets) indicated the program served 1503 pupils for an average of 3.8 hours of instruction per week. The average daily membership in the program was 904.5 pupils. The average days of enrollment (days scheduled) per pupil was 83.1 days and the average days of attendance (days served) per pupil was 71.8 days.

The 1503 pupils served were classified as either discontinued (282), not discontinued but attended the program 50 percent of the treatment period (662), or other pupils served (559). By grade level, 194 grade 1 pupils were discontinued and 88 grade 2 pupils were discontinued.

Desired Outcome 1 stated that at least 75 percent of the pupils in the treatment group (those who met the attendance criterion or were discontinued) would display evidence of each strategic processing behavior at least twice during the treatment period when reading appropriate instructional text to the satisfaction of the program teacher. This outcome, while not achieved by the entire treatment group population, was achieved by grade 2 pupils. Of the 944 pupils (716 grade 1 and 228 grade 2) in the treatment group, 644 pupils (70.3%) met the criterion, including 477 (66.6%) grade 1 pupils and 187 (82.0%) grade 2 pupils.

Desired Outcome 2 stated that at least 75 percent of grade 1 treatment group pupils would read at least five books at or above text reading level 8 as certified by the program teacher and that at least 75 percent of grade 2 treatment group pupils would read a minimum of five books at text reading level 15 or above. This desired outcome was not met at either grade level. Of the 716 grade 1 pupils in the treatment group, 382 (53.4%) read at least five books at text reading level 8 or above and of the 228 grade 2 pupils in the treatment group, 146 (64.0%) read at least 5 books at level 15 or above. Combined, 55.9% (528 pupils) of the 944 treatment group pupils read five books at the appropriate level.

In Reading Comprehension, grade 2 pupils (158) had an average NCE loss of 4.51 NCEs. Discontinued pupils (61) gained 0.85 NCEs and not discontinued pupils (97) lost 7.88 NCEs. On the benchmark assessment, 173 (95.1%) of the 182 discontinued grade 1 pupils with available benchmark scores passed the assessment, compared to 76 (15.7%) of the 485 not discontinued pupils who met the attendance criterion. This difference is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 356.48$, $p<.01$, one-tailed).

Parent involvement information showed that 3728 contacts were made with program teachers. There was an average of 2.5 contacts for each pupil served. The 944 treatment group pupils (62.8% of all pupils served) represented 74.9% (2792) of the total number of contacts made with parents or guardians.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to strengthen the 1997-98 Title I Early Literacy program:

1. During the 1994-95 school year the average NCE gain from pretest to posttest for grade 2 pupils in Reading Comprehension was 15.97 NCEs. In 1995-96 the average pupil lost 3.22 NCEs, and in 1996-97 the average pupil lost 4.51 NCEs. Program personnel need to closely examine the instructional program at grade 2 to determine what emphasis is being placed on comprehension skills during the instructional delivery of the program.

2. Neither desired outcome established for the Early Literacy program was met. Program developers need to discuss with program teachers why the desired outcomes were not met, determining whether pupils were not achieving these outcomes, whether teachers were inadequately documenting pupil performance for these desired outcomes, or whether the criteria for successful attainment of these desired outcomes had been set too high for achievement when evaluating the overall Early Literacy program.

3. The process by which pupils are discontinued from the program needs to be re-examined. Pupils are to be discontinued from the program when they reach the average reading ability of their classroom. Often times program teachers keep pupils in the program too long after they have reached the average level of ability for their classroom. If pupils are kept too long in the program, other pupils may be denied service.

4. As increased parent involvement is regarded as one of the indicators of effective schools, every effort must be undertaken to promote parental involvement in the program, especially in the areas of planning, operation, and evaluation.

5. The instructional strategies and techniques used by program teachers need to be shared with and enhanced by the regular classroom teacher. The instruction provided by the program teacher and by the regular classroom teacher must complement each other. The academic achievement of pupils will suffer if they receive mixed messages in their reading and writing instruction. Opportunities must be made available for program teachers and regular classroom teachers to develop a consistent whole language based approach to instruction.

6. An on-going process of site visitations by the program evaluator needs to be continued. These visits provide invaluable information for the program evaluator in the areas of content and instruction and provide program teachers the opportunity to clarify questions they may have about evaluation requirements and record keeping. These visitations also help build a rapport between the program teacher and program evaluator.

7. Inservice meetings should be continued to provide program teachers the opportunity to enhance their instructional intervention skills, to share instructional ideas with one another, and to clarify any concerns or misconceptions they may have about the total Early Literacy program.

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1996-97

PUPILS SERVED BY GRADE LEVEL

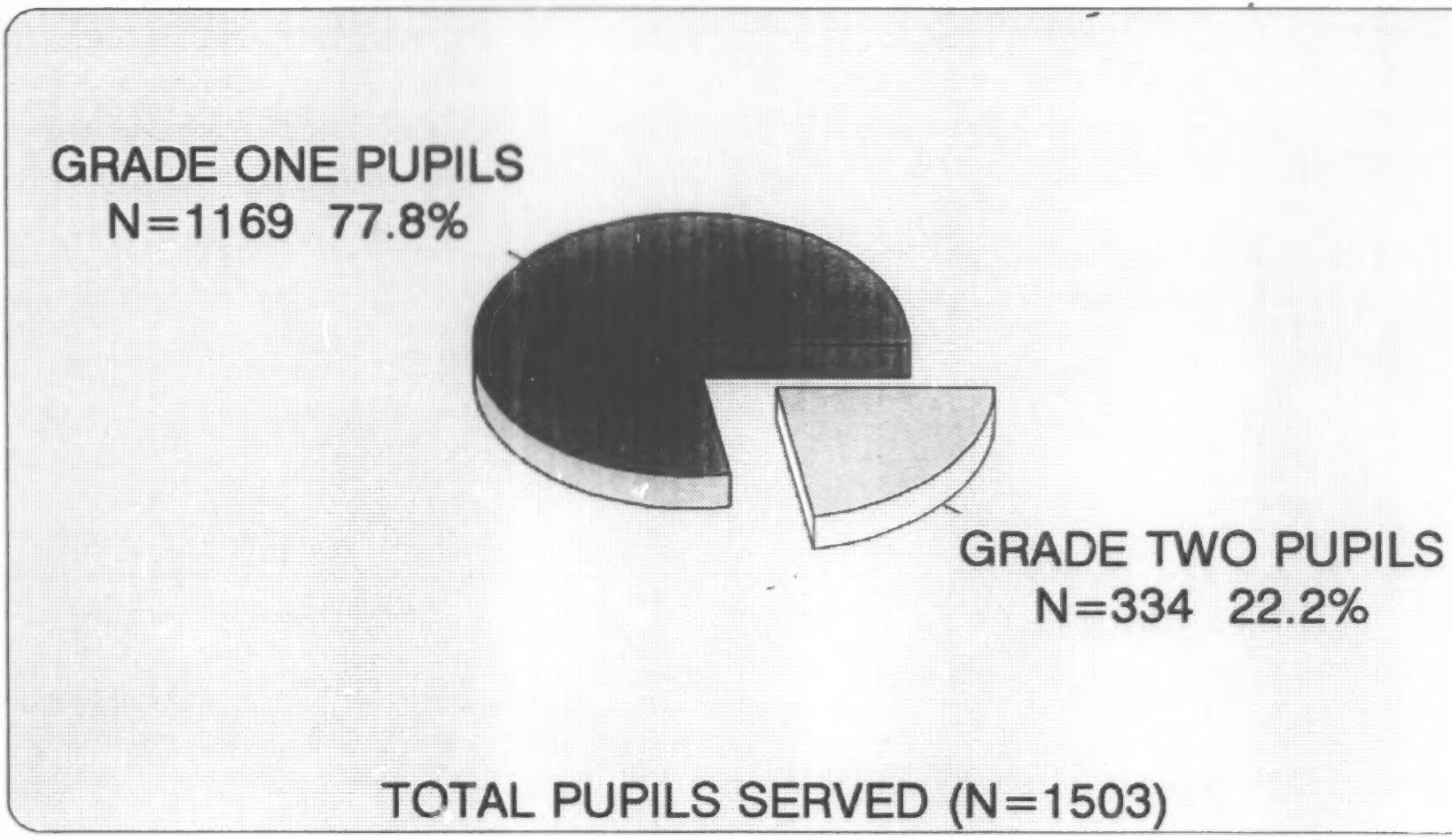


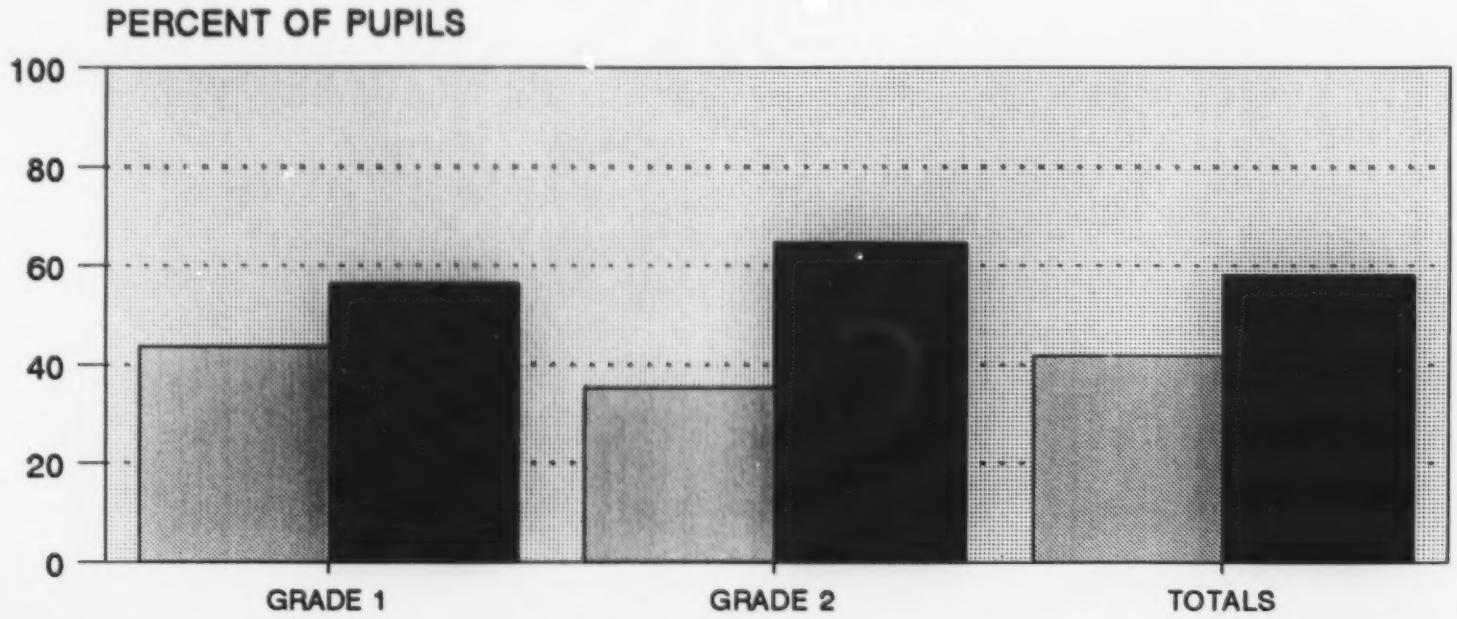
FIGURE 1

Grade one pupils were served in 33 schools and grade two pupils in 16 schools.

elgrdlvl

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1996-97

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF PUPILS SERVED BY GRADE LEVEL AND GENDER

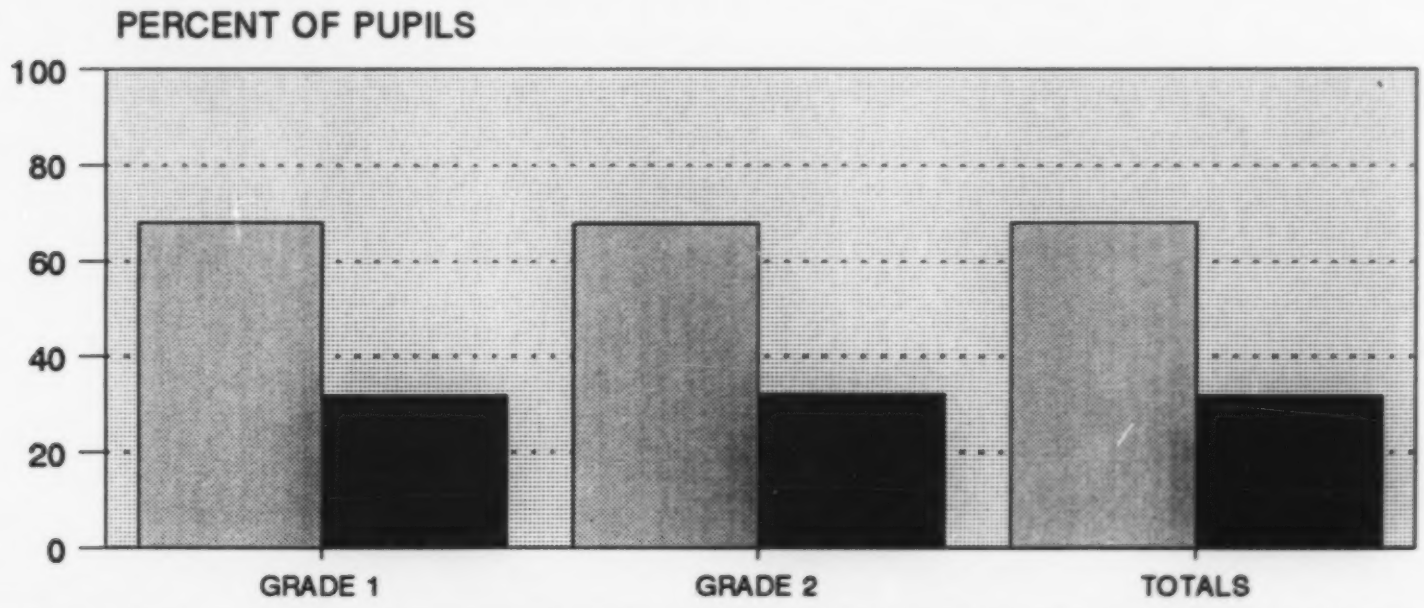


	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	TOTALS
FEMALES	510	118	628
% FEMALES	43.6	35.3	41.8
MALES	659	216	875
% MALES	56.4	64.7	58.2
TOTALS	1,169	334	1,503

FIGURE 2

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1996-97

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF PUPILS SERVED BY GRADE LEVEL AND RACE



	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	TOTALS
BLACK	794	226	1,020
% BLACK	67.9	67.7	67.9
NONBLACK	375	108	483
% NONBLACK	32.1	32.3	32.1
TOTALS	1,169	334	1,503

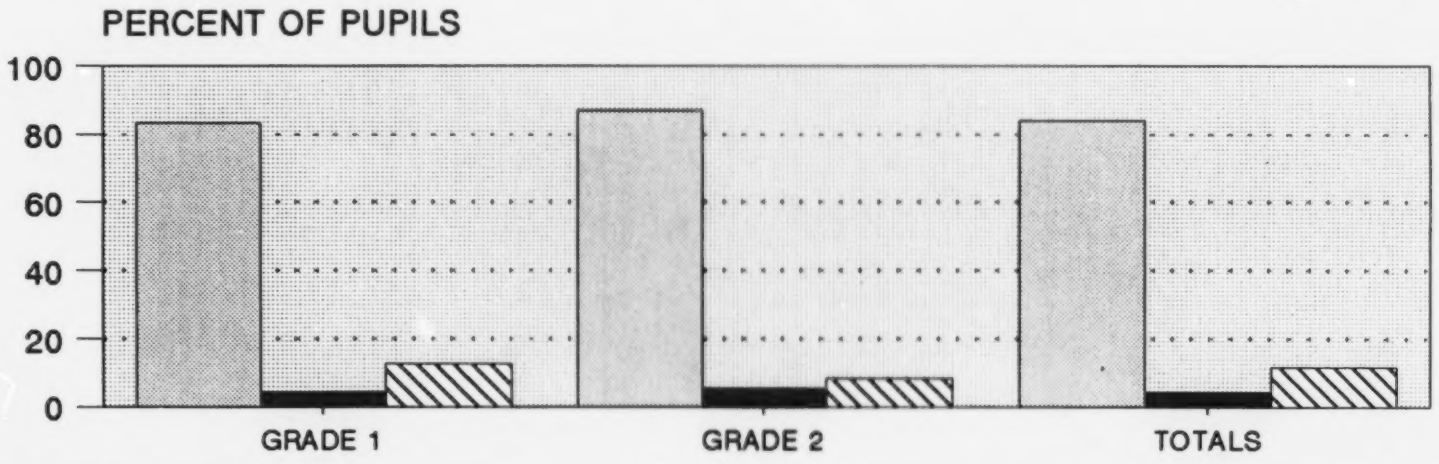
FIGURE 3

Nonblack includes Asian, Hispanic, Native American and White pupils.

elracepr

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1996-97

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF PUPILS SERVED BY GRADE LEVEL AND FREE OR REDUCED PRICE LUNCH STATUS

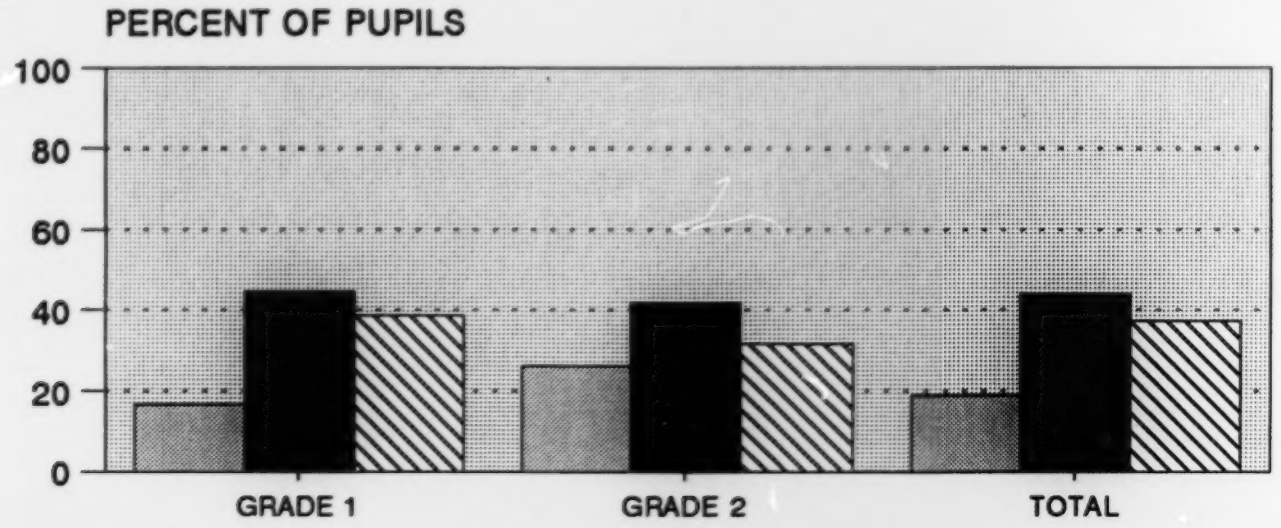


	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	TOTALS
FREE	973	290	1,263
% FREE	83.2	86.8	84
REDUCED	49	17	66
% REDUCED	4.2	5.1	4.4
PAYING	147	27	174
% PAYING	12.6	8.1	11.6
TOTALS	1,169	334	1,503

FIGURE 4

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1996-97

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF PUPILS SERVED BY DISCONTINUED STATUS



	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	TOTAL
DISCONTINUED	194	88	282
% DISCONTINUED	16.6	26.3	18.8
NOT DISC(50% ATD)	522	140	662
% NOT DISC(50% ATD)	44.7	41.9	44
OTHERS	453	106	559
% OTHERS	38.8	31.7	37.2
TOTAL	1,169	334	1,503

FIGURE 5

Early Literacy Reading Program

Desired Outcome 1 Results

- Desired Outcome 1: At least 75 percent of the pupils who attended the program at least 50 percent of the treatment period or were discontinued will display evidence of each strategic processing behavior at least twice during the treatment period when reading appropriate instructional text to the satisfaction of the Title I teacher.

- The following chart and table (Figure 6) present the analysis of the number and percent of pupils in the treatment group who met the performance criterion for Desired Outcome 1. The chart and table indicate the grade, number of pupils in the treatment group, number of pupils meeting the performance criterion, and the percent of pupils meeting the performance criterion.

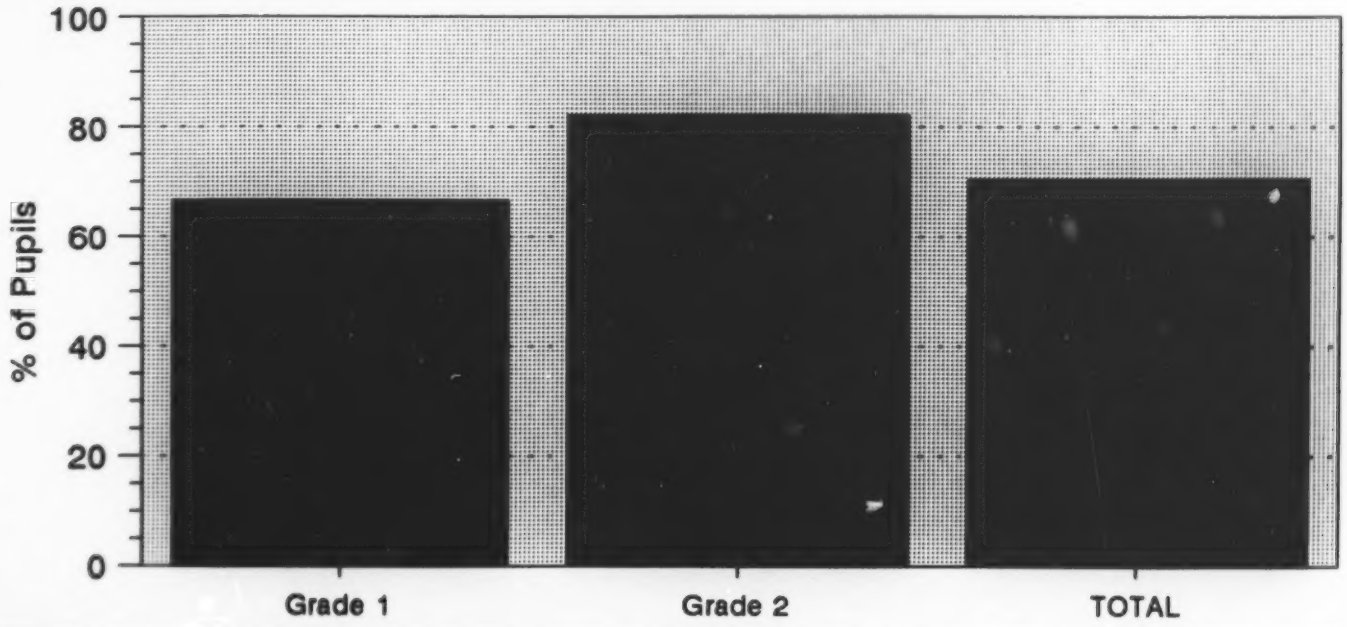
- Summary statements for pupils served in the Early Literacy program:

  > Of the 1503 pupils served, 944 (62.8%) met a criterion to be included in the treatment group.
  > Of the 716 grade 1 treatment group pupils, 477 (66.6%) met the performance criterion for Desired Outcome 1.
  > Of the 228 grade 2 treatment group pupils, 187 (82.0%) met the performance criterion for Desired Outcome 1.
  > Of the 944 total treatment group pupils, 664 (70.3%) met the performance criteria for Desired Outcome 1 indicating the desired outcome was not achieved.

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1996-97

Desired Outcome 1: Strategic Processing

Number and Percent of Pupils Who Met Criterion by Grade Level



	Grade 1	Grade 2	TOTAL
No. in Treatment DO1	716	228	944
No. Meeting DO1	477	187	664
% Meeting DO1	66.6	82	70.3

FIGURE 6

Of the 1503 total pupils served, 944 (62.8%) met a criterion of be included in the treatment group.

eldesot1

Early Literacy Reading Program

Desired Outcome 2 Results

- Desired Outcome 2: Of the grade 1 pupils who were discontinued or attended the program at least 50 percent of the treatment period at least 75 percent of the pupils will read at least five books at text reading level 8 or above as certified by the Title I teacher. At least 75 percent of the pupils in grade 2 who attended the program at least 50 percent of the treatment period or were discontinued will read throughout the treatment period a minimum of five books at text reading level 15 or above as certified by the Title I teacher.

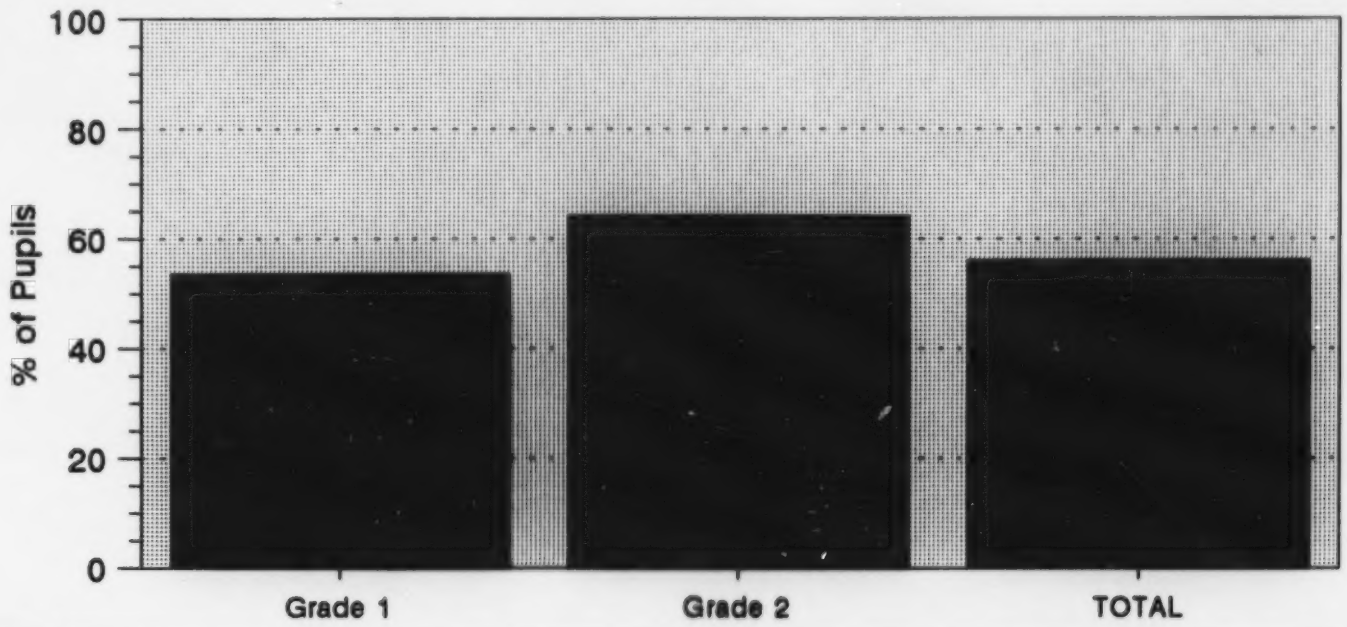
- The following chart and table (Figure 7) present the analysis of the number and percent of pupils in the treatment group who met the performance criterion for Desired Outcome 2. The chart and table indicate the grade, number of pupils in the treatment group, number of pupils meeting the performance criterion, and the percent of pupils meeting the performance criterion.

- Summary statements for pupils served in the Early Literacy program:

  > Of the 1503 pupils served, 944 (62.8%) met a criterion to be included in the treatment group.
  > Of the 716 grade 1 treatment group pupils, 382 (53.4%) met the performance criterion for Desired Outcome 2.
  > Of the 228 grade 2 treatment group pupils, 146 (64.0%) met the performance criterion for Desired Outcome 2.
  > Of the 944 total treatment group pupils, 528 (55.9%) met the performance criteria for Desired Outcome 2 indicating the desired outcome was not achieved.

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1996-97

Desired Outcome 2: Read a Given Number of Certified Books
Number and Percent of Pupils Who Met Criterion by Grade Level



	Grade 1	Grade 2	TOTAL
No. in Treatment DO2	716	228	944
No. Meeting DO2	382	146	528
% Meeting DO2	53.4	64	55.9

FIGURE 7

Of the 1503 pupils served, 944 (62.8%) met a criterion to be included in the treatment group.

eldesot2

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Early Literacy Reading Program

Standardized Test Results

- Aggregate test data is reported for grades 2 and above for individual buildings for Reading Comprehension. In order to be included in the evaluation sample for standardized test results a grade 2 pupil had to attend at least 50% of the treatment period and have both a pretest (spring 1996 - the last administration of the MAT7 for grade 1 pupils) and a posttest (spring 1997).

- The following chart (Figure 8) presents standardized test results for grade 2 pupils served by the Early Literacy program.
  - > In Advanced Skills (Reading Comprehension), the average loss for the 158 evaluation sample pupils was 4.51 NCEs.
  - > In Advanced Skills (Reading Comprehension), discontinued pupils (61) had an average gain of 0.85 NCEs and not discontinued pupils (97) had an average loss of 7.88 NCEs.

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1996-97

Advanced Skills (Reading Comprehension)
NCE Change Scores for Grade 2

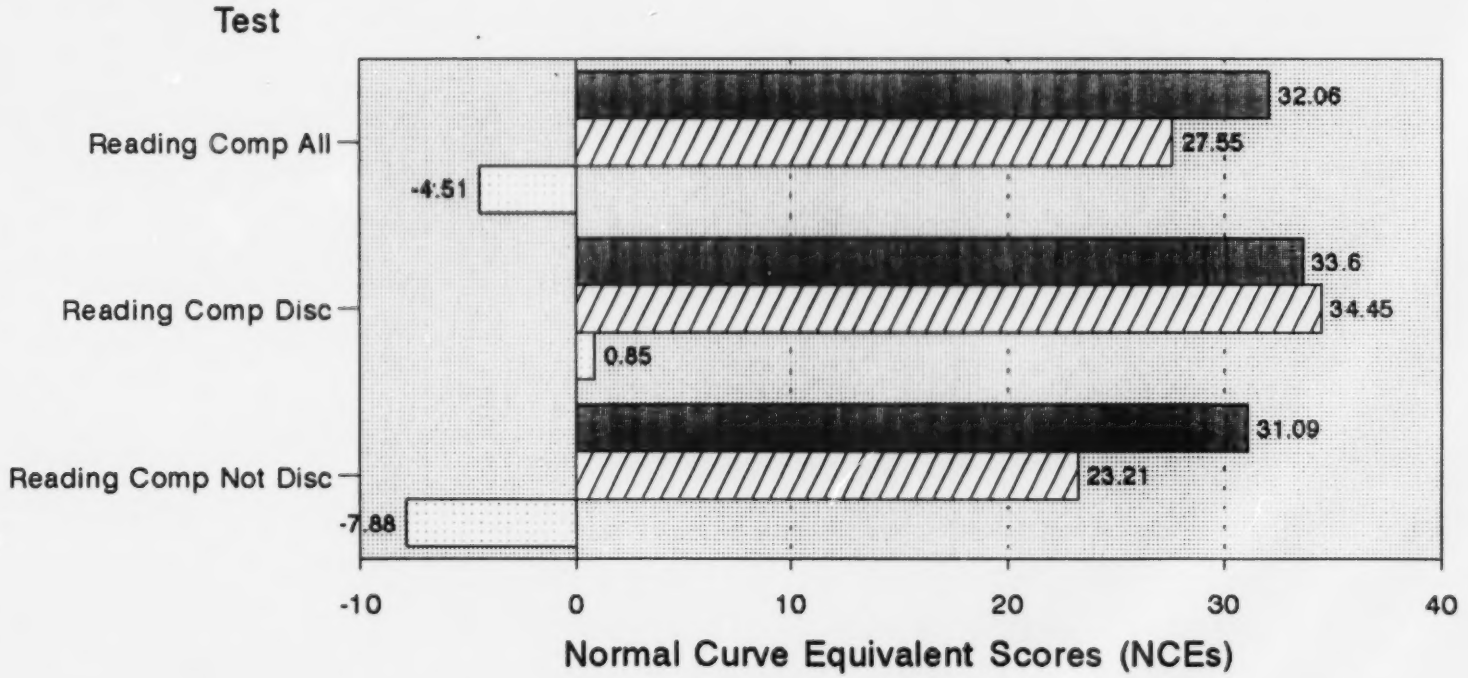


FIGURE 8

All (All Evaluation Sample Pupils); Disc (Discontinued Pupils in Evaluation Sample); Not Disc (Not Discontinued Pupils in Evaluation Sample).

Early Literacy Reading Program

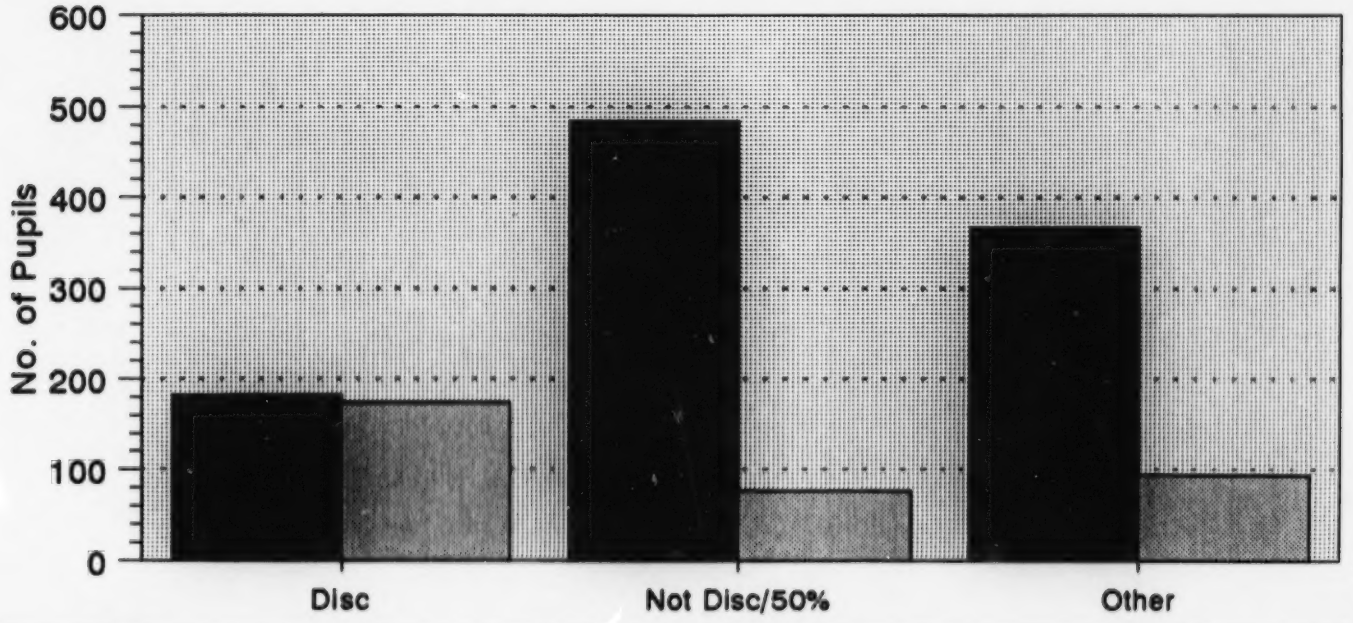
Benchmark Assessment Results

- A benchmark reading assessment was administered to all grade one pupils in the district in April, 1997. Pupils received either a passing score (Yes) or a non-passing score (No) on the benchmark assessment. A passing or non-passing score was determined by the pupil's classroom teacher using a modified miscue analysis as the pupil read a designated text.

- The following charts and tables (Figures 9 and 10) present benchmark assessment results for grade 1 pupils served by the Early Literacy program.
  - > Of the 182 discontinued pupils with available benchmark scores, 173 (95.1%) passed the benchmark assessment.
  - > Of the 485 not discontinued pupils who met the attendance criterion to be included in the treatment group, 76 (15.7%) passed the benchmark assessment.
  - > Of the 367 pupils who were not discontinued and who did not meet the attendance criterion to be included in the treatment group, 94 (25.6%) passed the benchmark assessment.

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1996-97

Benchmark Reading Assessment for Grade 1
Number of Successful Pupils by Discontinued Status



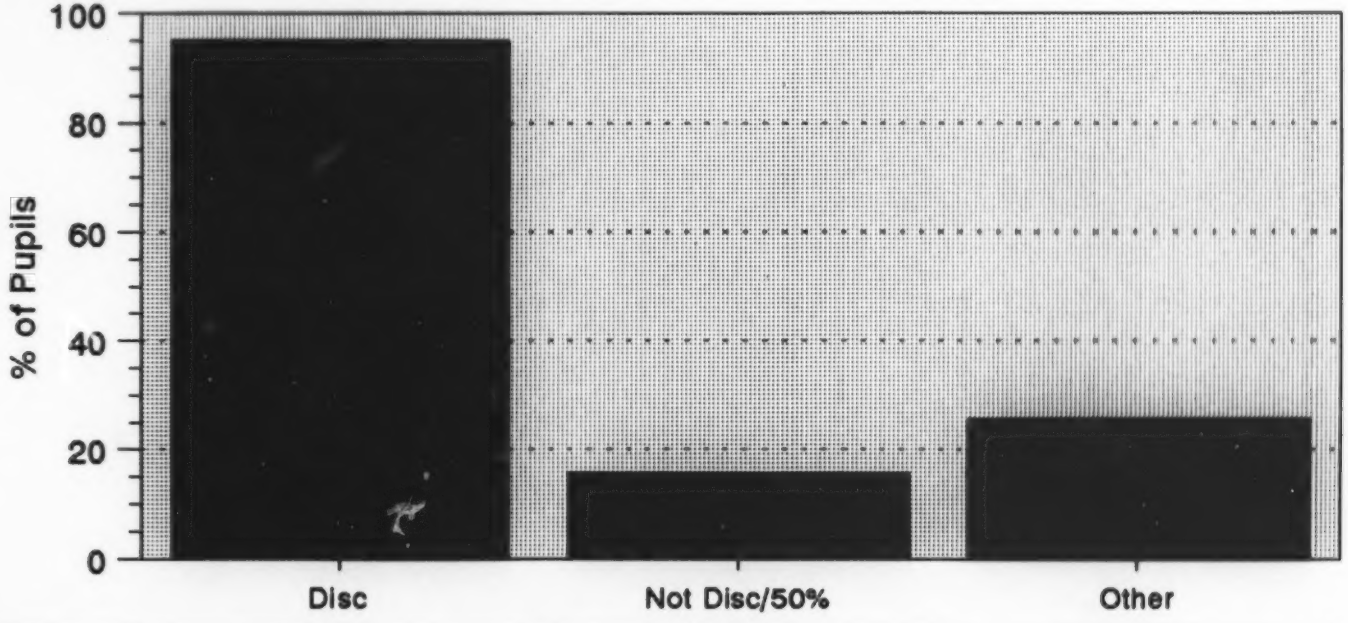
	Disc	Not Disc/50%	Other
No. in Subgroup	182	485	367
No. Meeting Criterion	173	76	94
% Meeting Criterion	95.1	15.7	25.6

FIGURE 9

Disc(Discontinued Pupils/Any Number of Days Served); Not Disc/50%(Not Discontinued Pupils/at Least 50% Attendance); Other(Pupils Served/Not Discontinued with Less than 50% Attendance).

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1996-97

Benchmark Reading Assessment for Grade 1
Percent of Successful Pupils by Discontinued Status



	Disc	Not Disc/50%	Other
No. in Subgroup	182	485	367
No. Meeting Criterion	173	76	94
% Meeting Criterion	95.1	15.7	25.6

FIGURE 10

Disc(Discontinued Pupils/Any Number of Days Served); Not Disc/50%(Not Discontinued Pupils/at Least 50% Attendance); Other(Pupils Served/Not Discontinued with Less than 50% Attendance).